



The Knowles Collection: What Is It and How Do I Use It?

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What is the Knowles Collection?

The basis for this collection began over 40 years ago when I found out that I had Jewish ancestry. The further I got into my research, the list of people I searched grew, eventually becoming a small database. It was then added to Familysearch to make the collection more manageable. That became the Knowles Collection.

Knowles Collection is 6 databases containing the genealogical records of over 1.4 million Jewish people. Built on the framework of the Isobel Mordy Collection, the records are gathered from multiple sources. Included are vital records, synagogue records, burial records, government records and family histories.

The collection continues to grow, it is added to almost every day. As of this handout there are over 2500 different sources, which have been cited over 2,000,000 times.

The Isobel Mordy Collection

Isobel Mordy, of Middlesex, England, documented the lives of various Jewish families throughout the British Isles. The 155 pedigrees in her collection, comprised over 7500 people, from information gathered from sources of all types. As her work was done before the availability of home computers, the people are linked together by a mathematical code and not in an electronic database (FHL film #1279240-#1279250).

Knowles Collection Databases

As of 6 October 2021, the Knowles Collection had 6 individual databases. The following is a list of those databases and the number of people documented within them. As new records are added almost daily, these numbers can change quickly.

- Jews of the British Isles 228,619
- Jews of Europe 479,775
- Jews of North America 641,424
- Jews of South America and Caribbean 21,453
- Jews of Africa, Orient and Middle East 43,682
- Jews of South Pacific 21,684

The people included in each database are based on where the record was created. Because our Jewish ancestors moved a great amount, sometimes by choice but most often for safety, it is possible the same person could appear in multiple databases.

Accessing the Knowles Collection

The Knowles Collection is contained within the collections of FamilySearch and can be search at www.familysearch.org. The following steps will guide you to the search page, and as things change, this also could change. This is accurate as of 6 October 2021, however the Knowles Collection blog (knowlescollection.blogspot.com) always has a current description for it. To access the collection.

- Click on the **Search** tab on the FamilySearch main page.
- From the dropdown box select **Genealogies**
- After filling in information such as name and birthplace, click on **Collection** under the **Other Options**
- From the drop-down box, insert **Community Trees** and then hit **search**.
- The results page from the information provided will now be shown.
- Clicking on a name from the search results will reveal the pedigree. Also shown will be the sources used to identify the person.